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ABSTRACT

This study, which centers on attitudes toward being a father, reports results of open-ended interviews with black fathers of infants. Findings challenge prevailing assumptions that characterize black fathers as uninvolved with their offspring and unwilling to make material contributions to support them. The 32 men interviewed were employed fathers in 2-parent families that were involved in a study of black infants' social development. Fathers were questioned about their motives and satisfactions in holding a paternal role, frustrations as fathers, and supports and barriers to enacting their roles. Descriptive analyses revealed that being a father was a core motive and organizing principle for participants' life-styles. Being a model to their infants and a guiding force in their children's lives were primary objectives for fathers. Family life experiences and family relationships were primary satisfactions associated with being a father. Fathers' jobs and incomes were second only to their relationships with their wives as critical supports in fathers' efforts to meet their standards of fathering. Findings are discussed as strong evidence of contemporary black fathers' commitment to their children's emotional and physical welfare and their eager participation in family life experiences. (RH)

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Black Fathers of Infants

Attitudes and Values Associated with Being a Father

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(Paper presented at the Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the Association of Black Psychologists, August 16, 1986 Oakland California)

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Abstract

This paper reports the descriptive results of open-ended interviews with black fathers of infants, particularly their views on being a father. The 32 men interviewed were employed fathers in 2-parent families involved in a study of black infants' social development. Fathers were questioned about their motives and satisfactions in holding a paternal role and their frustrations as fathers as well as supports and barriers to enacting their roles. Descriptive analyses revealed that being a father was a core motive and organizing principle for the life-style of the men interviewed. Being a model to their infants and being a guiding force in the children's lives were primary objectives of being a father. Family life experiences and family relationships were primary satisfactions associated with being a father. Job and income were critical supports to the men in their efforts to meet their standards of fathering, second only to their relationships to wives. Findings are discussed as strong evidence of contemporary black fathers' commitment to their children's emotional and physical welfare and fathers' eager participation in family life experiences.

Black Fathers of Infants:
Attitudes and Values Associated with
Being a Father

For a black man, what does it mean to be a father? Why does he undertake the role of parent and, once assumed, what are the satisfactions, frustrations, supports and barriers to fulfilling the role? In the black father's view, what is the impact of his fathering on his child? These are basic questions that should be answered by black fathers before inferences are drawn by social scientists that lead to widely publicized characterizations and evaluations of black paternal functioning. However, there are only a few instances in the social science literature of the last decade (McAdoo 1979; Price-Bonham & Skeen 1979; Savage, Adair & Friedman 1978) of evidence that black fathers have been asked questions similar to the ones above, about their motives. Nonetheless inferences about black fathers as a group that characterize them as uninvolved and uninterested in their offspring as well as unwilling to make material contributions to their children's upbringing abound. The black father's absence, rather than his presence, in his children's lives is assumed.

The study that will be reported challenges the prevailing assumption. The views of black fathers were

solicited and analyzed to find answers to the previously unaddressed questions detailed above. The fathers of infants were interviewed and their responses were analyzed on an exploratory basis as part of a multifaceted study of black infants' social development and the infants' relationships to their parents.

In the conceptual starting point of the study I attached primary importance to the distinctiveness of black family life and the implications of this distinctiveness for understanding both infant development and parental role functioning (Jackson 1983). In my view, the distinctiveness of black family life is a product of african based cultural values and extended family structures on the one hand, and the largely oppressive social and economic influences of the american societal structure on the psychosocial functioning of black people on the other hand. The unique heritage and challenges of black family life preclude extrapolation from studies of white families to derive meaningful understandings of black family relations. In recognition of the distinctiveness of black family life, I adopted a social ecological approach (Bronfenbrenner 1979) as a core feature of the study because it mandated attention to cultural identity issues. In accordance with this approach I examined the

societal and subcultural context of family life along with parent-child interactions in an effort to understand parents' conceptions of their roles. Although information from interviews will be the focus of this paper, both fathers and mothers were observed in interactions with their infants in their homes in the primary study.

Attending to black families that, in my view, have the opportunity to live with a meaningful degree of cultural integrity was another important objective of the study. Often the subjects in social science studies are from the poorest black families that are subjected to recurring severe crises because of their socioeconomic position. Their behaviors and attitudes are presented as though they were examples of universal black american culture when in fact they represent black culture under extreme duress. The Bill Moyers television documentary -- aired early this year -- is the latest report receiving widespread attention that implicitly berates all black fathers in this way. To avoid such distortion, black families that were not living in poverty conditions were selected for study. In the two-parent families in this study, with one exception, both parents worked and the fathers lived in the home with their infants. In selecting this type of

sample I anticipated that black fathers in the 1980s would be actively engaged with their children and psychologically invested in their welfare too, just as studies in the 1960s and 1970s had shown black fathers who did not live in poverty conditions in those decades to be (Billingsley 1968; Scanzoni 1975; Ten Houten 1970). Father in my study were asked specifically about the ways in which job related factors impacted their parenting behaviors and attitudes, in a pointed effort to detect the effects of economically viable living conditions on father role enactment.

The emphasis on values and attitudes in the interviews reflected my concern with searching for the cultural dimensions of present-day black fathering. In an effort to accomplish this, I drew on anthropological and social psychological insights into black family life (McAdoo 1980; Stack 1975; Young 1970). Those insights have identified the extended family and the black community social network contexts as critical influences on parental role enactment and child development.

Method

Subjects

Fathers were selected indirectly when parents of seven-month-old infants were recruited for participation in the research project. The project was a short-term

longitudinal study of black infants' social development during the transition from infancy to toddlerhood. Local birth records were used to identify healthy infants with mothers who worked. Selection criteria yielded 32 infants from two-parent families with a father living in the home. All 32 fathers were employed with the exception of one retired father. They ranged from 24 to 64 years old, but the mean age for the sample was 33 years old. In addition to being the natural father of the focal infant in the study, some were first time fathers, some had other offspring living with them, others were stepfathers of children living with them, and some were noncustodial fathers of children who did not live with them. All the fathers had wives who worked more than half-time or who were full-time students. Occupation and education information indicated that the families were working and middle class (specific income information was not solicited because of concern about intruding on participants' sense of privacy).

In contrast to reports that black people are reluctant to participate in research projects, the overwhelming majority of fathers recruited were particularly eager to be involved in this study. They readily agreed with the rationale for the research

project that pointed to the lack of information about black men's roles in family life; fathers were eager to offer their opinions to fill the void.

Each father was interviewed for 60 to 90 minutes in the family home when the focal infant was eight months old. Most of the data and the case examples to be reported are drawn from those interviews. However, interpretation of the interview information is enhanced by information from informal discussions with fathers at the time of other contacts for study involvement: fathers were observed in their homes with their infants twice, in a laboratory play session once, and in some cases during a brief terminating interview. Overall, a rich pool of information that formed the basis for data interpretation was collected.

The Interview

Fathers were asked a variety of open-ended questions about their family life experiences, as well as their opinions about parenting. They were asked about the practical aspects of running a household and caring for children. Specifically, they were asked about the division of family maintenance and infant care tasks between parents, and the ways in which their relationships to their wives impacted their relationships to their infants. They were also

questioned about the ways in which their employment and their wives' employment affected all members of the family including themselves.

The fathers were asked to characterize their infants as personalities from birth to the time of the interview, and to explain why the infants had the attributes identified. The purpose of this line of questioning was to delve into the relationships between the fathers and infants and into the particulars of paternal child rearing goals and practices. Fathers were asked to give a brief profile of the type of person they would like for their infant to become as an adult, and to specify what they were doing to bring about the desired outcome. Fathers were questioned extensively about their motives, objectives, satisfactions and frustrations in enacting a paternal role, and about supports and barriers to enacting their roles. Finally they were asked to define the role of a parent by identifying the three or four most important tasks of the role.

The fathers' responses were categorized according to logical groupings or ratings determined on a post hoc basis and tabulated for a sample profile.

Results and Discussion

All fathers (100%) considered themselves to be

actively involved in routine care of their infants, and saw themselves as central figures in their infants' social lives. Most fathers viewed their involvement as a natural outcome of wanting a good, close relationship to their child. However, the practical demands on the families of maintaining family life and parents' jobs outside of the home were cited as additional reasons for paternal involvement in caring for the infant. In most cases there were regular time intervals when fathers were the sole caretaker of the infant. This was the case because 65% of the parent couples did not have concurrent work schedules and 73% did not have 9-to-5 work hours when hired baby sitters and day care facilities are accessible. The family situation of the father in the case example that follows exemplifies these findings:

> Case example 1: Father L was a 25-year-old teacher whose son, the first and only child, was the focal subject of the study. His wife was a nurse. As a teacher, father L worked a five day week from 8:30 to 4, but his wife worked four 9 hour evening shifts primarily on the weekends. Although his wife cared for the baby during weekdays, father L was the primary caretaker during the day on weekends when the mother slept. Father L felt the arrangement

brought him into a particularly close, comfortable relationship to his son, because of the regularity of the weekend days that they spent together. Fathers, however, did not assume primary responsibility for infant care and did not do most of the housework. As shown in table 1 and 2 mothers were the primary

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Insert Tables 1 and 2 about here

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caretakers and housekeepers. Nonetheless, fathers assumed a greater portion of the responsibility for infant care than for housework, suggesting that they preferred to make their contribution to household maintenance while developing their relationships to their children.

The fathers were unequivocally enthusiastic about enacting their paternal roles. They were particularly attuned to the experiences that the role provided. Table 3 shows the three most frequently mentioned

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Insert Table 3 about here

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satisfactions of being a father and, as indicated, active involvement with their infant as an expression of family life was a primary satisfaction for half of the

men interviewed. The second and third most frequently expressed satisfactions clearly support the stated preference of the fathers for living the family life style. Their interest in progeny, indicates their conscious concern for assuming a role in the extension of their own psychosocial character as well as genetic makeup. Their attention to the details of the infants' behaviors indicates a pattern of enjoyable person-to-person responsiveness that is the foundation of a positive parent-child relationship. Actually, as table 4 indicates, many fathers held such intensely

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Insert table 4 about here

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positive views of fathering that they insisted that they had no dissatisfactions or frustrations with it and could not be dissuaded from that view when challenged. All the respondents said that the satisfactions outweighed the dissatisfactions, but a minority were willing to concede that being a father limited some personal freedoms and indulgences that were of personal importance.

The responses to the questions about motives and objectives for being a father clearly reveal that most respondents were investing a great deal of thought and

effort in fathering. Fathers were much more than passive observers who were entertained by watching their child grow. Rather, they were active contributors and directors of that growth. Table 5 lists the three most

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Insert Table 5 about here

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frequent types of responses to the questions on motives and objectives. Those responses reveal a strong sense of self-confidence and conviction about what should be achieved in fathering and how to accomplish it. Many of the comments of the respondents, during as well as after the interview, revealed a very reflective, flexible and systematic approach to parenting. In marked contrast to stereotypical characterizations of black fathers as noncommunicative, stern disciplinarians, a number of the fathers talked at great length about attending to their infant's individuality and coaxing rather than commanding to direct their infant's behavior. Case examples 2 and 3 exemplify some of these findings:

> Case example 2: Father W was a 32-year-old office manager and father to one daughter who was the focal study participant. He was emphatic in stating the goal of being present in his daughter's life at all points of her development as one of his primary

goals in fathering. He explained that he had not had a close relationship to his father until he became an adult because his father's work had required extensive travel and being away from home much of the time. Although he respected his own father, father W wanted to do more for his daughter as a parent than his own father had done for him. Father W had waited to become a father until he could settle down to enjoy family life; he felt free of youthful wander lust and inadequate income. He played with the baby a lot, played his favorite music on his instrument for her and read to her. He was flattered by comments from friends and relatives who said that his daughter not only looked like him but had her father's active gregarious personality. Father W stated, "the idea that I did this -- she's mine" was what he liked most about being a father.

Case example 3: Father B was a 24-year-old fireman with a son who was his first and only child. One of his primary goals in fathering was to communicate with his son well enough to be a guiding force in the child's life. Father B felt that goal could be achieved best if he spent a lot of time with his son. Father B actually spent considerable time during daytime hours with his son because, as a

fireman, his off-work schedule allowed him to do so. Father B reported that watching the baby grow and achieve developmental milestones, and perceiving his son as a smaller version of himself were profound satisfactions of being a father. Father B pointed enthusiastically to his son's mastery of operating a spinning top for the first tim -- which occurred in my presence -- as an example of the kind of development he had witnessed and found enjoyable.

Many fathers, without the least bit of hesitation, credited their wives as the primary support for their efforts to live up their self chosen goals as fathers. Table 6 shows this. Fathers especially appreciated

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Insert Table 6 about here

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their wives' encouragement to be involved with their infants and their wives' reassurance about fathering initiatives and actions. As one father pointed out, his wife's encouragement to be involved in caring for the infant was not caused by practical concerns about getting a baby sitter to function as a surrogate mother. In his case relatives made themselves available for that. Rather, his wife was making a genuine attempt to share the joys that went with the parenting job, and to

firmly root him as the infant's father in the infant's emotional life.

Fathers' comments about religious values and convictions provided a striking example of black cultural distinctiveness in fathering. Many fathers made reference to their religious and moral views during the interviews and in informal contacts, even though only a minority specifically identified religious conviction as a support to their fathering efforts (see table 6). Several fathers who were actively affiliated with religious communities were emphatic in pointing out the importance of those communities in their lives. They also talked about receiving specific supports from their church communities and contrasted that support to what they perceived to be a society and immediate social milieu that was hostile to black fathers and wholesome family life. In addition, some fathers who were not actively affiliated with a church or religious faith at the time of the interview, credited an upbringing oriented to religious and spiritual values as a significant contributor to their character strengths. Those character strength, in turn, supported them in their effort to be conscientious fathers in what they also perceived to be a societal context that did not support family life. Case examples 4, 5 and 6

illustrate these views:

Case example 4: Father R was a 31-year-old gardener with two sons. His second son was the focal subject in the study. Father R said that his relationship to The Lord, along with his relationship to his wife, was the greatest support to his efforts to reach his goals as a father. He felt his religious conviction supported him in his effort to maintain a positive climate in his home in the face of adversity as well as persevere in being a father and family man. In fact his small, close knit church community had been a practical support to his family. The family did not have a car, and was dependent on public transportation for getting to work and baby sitters. Members of his church helped out on a daily basis by transporting family members to three different locations each morning. Father R had also experienced a 9 month period of unemployment during which his family's material situation had been quite bleak. He felt that his faith in himself had been challenged but not shaken by that experience. Character strengths that he attributed to religious conviction had helped him through that period. At the time of the interview father R felt close to his prime goal as a father,

of providing the basic necessities for his family.

Case example 5: Father F was a 41-year-old orderly whose infant son was his only child. Father F had married late in life and had acquired a teen-aged stepdaughter with the marriage. He did not attend church regularly, nor did he identify religion as a support to his functioning as a parent. He did, however, say he wanted his son to develop a christian character, as father F felt he himself had. To this end he encouraged his own mother (i.e. the infant's grandmother) to take the infant to church for religious education.

Case example 6: Father T was a 25-year-old security guard supervisor. His one and only son was a focal subject in the study. Father T was especially concerned with modeling a sound, moral approach to living in his father role. He felt that the state of the economy and the position of blacks in it exerted tremendous pressures on black men who were trying to maintain families. He conceded that he encountered many opportunities to become involved in "hustling" to help make ends meet. He resisted them, however, because of a personal conviction that being straight and living by high moral standards would help him impart his values and character

insights to his son.

A significant minority of fathers were satisfied with their jobs(i.e. income) as supports to their paternal efforts to provide acceptable material living conditions for their children. Case examples 7 and 8 illustrate the thinking of men in this group:

Case example 7: Father K was a 42-year-old engineer. He had married late in life to a professional woman in her mid thirties who was also marrying for the first time. In this respect their son, who was their first child, was the offspring of "older parents". The family life style, however, was quite youthful. The threesome frequently went on countryside trips in father K's sports car on the weekends, as well as to the zoo and other child centered locations. Father K had grown up in a foster home, having been abandoned by an abusive and neglectful mother as a preschooler. He never saw his biological father. He identified strongly with the family centered, education oriented values of his long-term foster parents, to whom he had become very attached. He also felt great pride at his own educational attainment and secure professional position. When asked what he felt was the greatest support in trying to realize his goals as a father,

he quickly said that having a good job and salary was important, along with the peace of mind that came from knowing his wife could also provide for his son if he were to die. He emphasized that being a good provider was central to his concept of a good father, and that he would be motivated to provide for his child even if he were to get divorced.

Case example 8: Father BB was a 37-year-old bank employee who had recently taken a night security guard position in anticipation of returning to school. He was a college graduate, but wanted to go to graduate seminary school. He was also the father of five children. His youngest child, a daughter, was the focal subject of the study. His family lived in a home that they owned in a neat, well kept working class neighborhood, and had two cars. When asked what he felt were the greatest supports to his efforts to live up to his goals as a father, Father BB cited being able to be a good provider, in addition to his religious faith.

However the majority of fathers, as indicated in table 7, viewed their pay as inadequate and, therefore, an

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Insert Table 7 about here

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obstacle to their optimal functioning as a father. Most fathers were explicit in saying that they viewed the family's income as their primary responsibility and they expressed some uneasiness and vulnerability to failing in their role if they were to lose their jobs. Case examples 9 and 10 reflect these frequently expressed views:

Case example 9: Father FF was a 26-year-old inventory foreman at a warehouse, whose daughter and only child was the focal subject of the study. He stated that making his daughter's life financially secure was his primary goal as a father and he felt that having a decent job was an important help in trying to achieve that goal. He also reported lack of money was a frustration. Specifically, he was concerned that he might not be able to buy a home for his family. He was also skeptical that public education would provide a good education for his child, and wanted to have money for private schooling to give her "something extra."

Case example 10: Father E was a 28-year-old truck driver whose daughter was the focal subject in the study; he had one child from a previous marriage with whom he had lost contact. He said that at the time of the interview, he had no problems in being

the type of good figure in his daughter's life that he aspired to be. He was emphatic, however, in saying he did not take good times for granted. He reported that he had been unemployed once for a long period of time, and had worked as a liquor store clerk where he had been in contact with many people who were unemployed. He said he sometimes felt uncomfortable with the idea of what would happen to his family if he lost the job that he held. He said that those thoughts made him more careful and tactful at work even though there was little unpleasantness associated with his job.

The fathers felt that they had to deal with the implications of inadequate income. This attitude is reflected in the high incidence of fathers working overtime or taking second jobs (56%) in contrast to none of the mothers taking on more work for the sake of added income. Related to this, fathers frequently complained of lack of time to spend with the infant to the degree needed to be an ideal father. A number of fathers expressed regrets that the demands of their work deprived them of the opportunity to observe as much of their infant's development as they would like. In addition, a few fathers said that strain in adjusting their life-style to accommodate the infant was tied to

compromises in career promoting activities ensuing from the time demands of parenting. However, in the majority of cases where strain of life-style adjustment was reported, the fathers involved said that only minor adjustments were at issue such as temporarily forfeiting sports and recreation activities.

A solid majority of 66% of the fathers, as shown in table 8, stated that providing for a child's physical

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Insert Table 8 about here

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and material needs is the mandatory cornerstone of good parenting. Although the question did not ask fathers to distinguish between maternal and paternal roles, several fathers specifically stated that they could not envision being a good father without being a good material provider. Other fathers said it would be very difficult for them as men, if not impossible, to be a good father without being a good breadwinner. This emphasis on breadwinning gives a penetrating but perplexing view of the fathers' statements about objectives and motives for being a father in that no reference to providing material resources appeared in the three most frequently identified goals of fathering. This might have happened because all of the respondents were employed and primary

financial supporters of their children. They may have considered such support to be a minimal measure of adequacy rather than a part of the paternal role ideal, and therefore they took their own breadwinning abilities for granted in the process of delineating the fathering ideal. Whatever the case, respondents felt that children's basic physical needs had to be met before the second and third parental role prescriptions of guiding the child's intellectual growth and guiding the child's character development could be achieved.

In the fathers' views, their infants were thriving and this was largely a reflection of good fathering and mothering. As shown in table 9 and 10, the fathers

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Insert Tables 9 and 10 about here

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saw primarily positive qualities in their infants and attributed those traits to extension of parents' characteristics and to their own child rearing efforts. Tables 11 and 12 indicate the fathers'

Insert Tables 11 and 12 about here

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main long-term goals for their children: development of cognitive competence and acquisition of personality

qualities needed to garner a comfortable life. In elaborating on their goals, fathers expressed concern that their children go beyond adapting to the survival demands of their environment and mere existence, to acquire control over the forces directing their lives. The fathers' emphasis on wanting their children to achieve control of their lives parallels and underscores the fathers' overall concern with control (e.g. guiding and directing) in paternal functioning. It appeared that fathers were striving to make their children's personal qualities and accomplishments mirror their own active, directive approach to parenting, and they felt their approach reflected cultural heritage as much as personal values. Many fathers reported that their approach to parenting drew on the best of the parenting they had received as children. In this respect their views demonstrated respect and confidence in black people's ability to raise their children and definite cultural continuity in child rearing. Case examples 11 and 12 illustrate this:

> Case example 11: Father V was a 64-year-old retiree from a career in the armed forces. He had elected to stay home to be his daughter's primary caretaker instead of starting a second career. His daughter was the only child father V and his wife had.

Father V enjoyed playing with his child, watching educational television with her and reading to her. He reported that they took daily trips to the park or downtown where he would point out interesting things to his observant daughter's delight. Father V was emphatic in saying that he wanted his daughter to know a lot and become well educated. He felt that it was important that she be well prepared for a professional field of her choice, and that a profession would allow her to be self-supporting and free of compromising work situations or personal relationships.

Case example 12: Father J was a 29-year-old father to two daughters and one stepson; his youngest daughter was the focal subject of the study. He ran his own custodial services business. He enjoyed teaching all of his children the things that his father had taught him: how to fish, how to read the bible, how to build things, etc. Father J wanted his daughter to be able to read, count and do challenging puzzles by the time she entered school. To this end he encouraged her to explore and play with a lot of things from keys to educational toys. He hoped that she would be independent as an adult with her own home and responsibilities of her

choosing.

Conclusions

Married black fathers have deep psychological investments in promoting their children's emotional and physical welfare. This is the overriding conclusion to be drawn from the research reported. Married black fathers' commitment is in evidence in their eager participation in family life, their reliance on their wives for feedback on their fathering and, most of all, in their devotion to active involvement in their children's lives. This is the unequivocal conclusion to be drawn, even though the extensiveness of the constructive values and attitudes expressed by the men in the study might seem suspect when compared to the innumerable negative characterizations of black fathers that have been widely publicized.

The respondents' statements show that black men feel that they need a number of resources to enact viable paternal roles. Social and emotional support are important and apparently readily available from wives, family members, church members and cultural heritage for men like those in the study. Economic resources are also important but less accessible even for the relatively privileged participants in this study. The fathers' recurring emphasis on being able to provide for

their children indicates that job and income resources may be the most critical factors in developing and sustaining a positive father role for black men.

The study results give clear indications of the need for exacting study of black fathers from all socioeconomic backgrounds and life circumstances; the results reported are tentative and cannot be generalized to men who are not married, employed and living with their wives and children. Nonetheless, in the study sample there were men who had grown up in severely deprived, female headed families who were just as conscientious as fathers as the men who had grown up in emotionally supportive two-parent families. Study results demonstrated that a less privileged background was not necessarily an obstacle to conscientious fathering.

This study focused on fathers of infants but there is a clear need for studies of black fathers with children at a variety of ages. A longitudinal study of black fathers that paralleled the development of their children from birth through the childhood years would make an invaluable contribution to understanding how fatherhood germinates and unfolds for black men. To be of maximum use such a study would have to track black fathers, not simply marital relationships or marital

status, to get revealing insights into the full array of facets of black fatherhood and paternal identity formation. The potential utility of such an approach was suggested by the fact that some of the fathers in the study had first become parents when they were teenagers. None of the men who were teenaged fathers retained daily contact with their first children but all of the teenaged father had become actively involved fathers to children born when the men were adults. Clearly, becoming a father as a teenager did not destroy the potential for constructive fathering in adulthood.

In general, more research on black fathers is needed. Research the examines the intersection of economic and psychological factors in the lives of black men with children would make an invaluable contribution to the construction of a complete, sound information base for clinical practice and the development of public policy impacting the black family.

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Table 1

Fathers' Views of Division of Infant Care in Home

Response	% Sample
Mother does most	31
Mother does slightly more	41
Equally divided between parents	16
Father does slightly more	13

Note. N=32.

Table 2

Fathers' Views of Division of Housework

Response	% Sample
Mother does most	34
Mother does slightly more	41
Equally divided between parents	25

Note. N=32.

Table 3

Satisfactions of Fathering

Frequent response	% Sample
Enjoyment of interaction with infants/family life in general	49
Having progeny/children as an extension of self	30
Entertainment of observing infant's development, antics, etc.	24

Note. N=32; multiple responses possible per subject

Table 4

Dissatisfactions/Frustrations of Fathering

Frequent response	% Sample
Emphatic, absolutely none	39
Often tired, nerve-racking, not enough sleep	28
Restricts satisfying activities	17

Note. N=32; multiple responses possible per subject

Table 5

Motives/Objectives in Fathering

Frequent response	% Sample
Give infant ample time and attention	35
Be a highly visible character model for the infant	35
Be a guiding, disciplinary force in the infant's life	30

Note. N=32; multiple responses possible per subject

Table 6

Supports for Fathers' Efforts to Reach Goals

Frequent response	% Sample
Wife	42
Job/income	19
Religious conviction	17
Own attributes and convictions	17

Note. N=32; multiple responses possible per subject

Table 7

Barriers/Impediments to Enacting Ideal Father Role

Frequent response	% Sample
Lack of money	50
Lack of time	32
Strain of adjusting life-style to accommodate infant	14

Note. N=32; multiple responses possible per subject

Table 8

Fathers' Views of Parent Role Prescriptions

Frequent response	% Sample
Provide for child's material needs	66
Foster intellectual growth, interests and curiosity	36
Be a guiding, disciplining force in child's life	33

Note. N=32; multiple responses possible per subject

Table 9

Fathers' Perceptions of Their 8-month-olds

Frequent response	% Sample
Happy and good natured	51
Bright and playful	43

Note. N=32; multiple responses possible per subject

Table 10

Fathers' Views on Reasons for Infants' Traits

Frequent response	% Sample
Infant resembles parent(s)	46
Effects of loving parents, good life environment	20

Note. N=32; multiple responses possible per subject

Table 11

Fathers' Goals for Child Personality at School Entry

Frequent response	% Sample
Bright, intelligent, able in school	67
Curious, eager to explore, open minded, tolerant	26

Note. N=32; multiple responses possible per subject

Table 12

Fathers' Goals for Child's Personality as Adult

Frequent response	% Sample
Successful, self-reliant, self-supporting, materially comfortable	43
Independent, self-willed	30
Intelligent, smart	27

Note. N=32; multiple responses possible per subject